

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9171

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T BEIRUT 4624

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINS LE SY PEPR PINT

SUBJ: CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT IN EAST BEIRUT

1. THE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS AND SYRIANS AGREED LATE AUGUST 9 TO IMPLEMENT A CEASEFIRE IN EAST BEIRUT. THE AGREEMENT WAS REACHED AFTER A SERIES OF MEETINGS INVOLVING PRESIDENT SARKIS, PRIME MINISTER AL HOSS, FOREIGN MINISTER FUAD BOUTROS, ARMY COMMANDER VICTOR KHOURY, ADF COMMANDER SAMI KHATIB, NLP MILITARY LEADER DANY CHAMOUN, AND DEPUTY AMIN GEMAYEL. IN MEETING WITH EMBOFF IN PHALANGE OFFICE IN JDAIDE, MORNING OF AUGUST 10, AMIN SAID AGREEMENT WAS A THREE-STAGE "DISENGAGEMENT" PROVIDING FOR THE FOLLOWING:

A. STAGE ONE: TO BE IMPLEMENTED IMMEDIATELY. THE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS WOULD WITHDRAW FROM THE STREETS. THE SYRIAN SOLDIERS WOULD WITHDRAW FROM THE SEVEN POSTS THEY WERE NOW MANNING IN ASHRAFIYAH TO THE RIZK TOWER AND ONE OTHER BUILDING NEAR IT. LEBANESE GENDARMES WOULD TAKE OVER THE SYRIAN POSITIONS. (AMIN
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NOTED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD WANTED TO REPLACE THE SYRIANS WITH SUDANESE OR SAUDI TROOPS BUT THIS HAD NOT PROVED FEASIBLE).

B. STAGE TWO: TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN ONE TO TWO WEEKS. THE LEBANESE ARMY WOULD TAKE OVER THE RIZK TOWER IN EAST BEIRUT AND THE MURR TOWER IN WEST BEIRUT FROM THE SYRIAN ARMY. THE LEBANESE ARMY WOULD ALSO TAKE OVER SYRIAN POSITIONS IN "NO MAN'S

LAND" BETWEEN EAST AND WEST BEIRUT.

C. STAGE THREE: TO BE IMPLEMENTED AFTER TOWERS ARE OCCUPIED BY LEBANESE ARMY. THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT WOULD BEGIN DISCUSSIONS WITH ALL CONCERNED PARTIES ON THE ROLE OF THE ADF IN LEBANON. (AMIN COMMENTED THAT HE BELIEVED THE ADF SHOULD REMAIN, SINCE THE LEBANESE STATE HAD NO EFFECTIVE SECURITY FORCES. HE THOUGHT, HOWEVER, COUNTRIES OTHER THAN SYRIA WOULD HAVE TO INCREASE THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE ADF.) AT THE SAME TIME, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD UNDERTAKE DISCUSSIONS ON ARRIVING AT A NATIONAL ENTENTE IN LEBANON.

2. COMMENTS:

A. THE CEASE-FIRE IS GENERALLY HOLDING AS OF 1400 HOURS LOCAL AUGUST 10, AND TRAFFIC HAS ALREADY INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY IN EAST BEIRUT. THE UNIFIED COMMAND OF THE LEBANESE MILITIAS HAS ORDERED ITS MEN TO "CEASE FIRE ON ALL FRONTS" AND "NOT TO APPEAR IN MILITARY UNIFORMS OR CARRY WEAPONS IN PUBLIC IN THE ASHRAFIYAH AREA."

B. ACCORDING TO AMIN, AS OF 1100 HOURS AUGUST 10, SYRIANS HAD EVACUATED FIVE OF SEVEN POSTS IN QUESTION. SYRIANS HAD, HOWEVER, DEMANDED USE OF ANOTHER BUILDING NOT SPECIFIED IN THE ACCORD, WHICH WAS "RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE" OF THE CHRISTIAN AREA AND NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE MILITIAS. AMIN THOUGHT THIS PROBLEM WOULD BE
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SOLVED.

C. AMIN ALSO SAID THAT ALTHOUGH AGREEMENT WAS HOLDING SO FAR, HE COULD NOT PREDICT ULTIMATE OUTCOME. "MORE MILITANT ELEMENTS" (I.E. BACHIR) COULD DISRUPT THE CEASE-FIRE. AS FAR AS EMBASSY IS CONCERNED, ALTHOUGH THINGS ARE STILL SHAKY AT BEST, THE NEW AGREEMENT IS THE FIRST THING WE'VE HAD TO CHEER ABOUT FOR A LONG TIME. END COMMENT.
PARKER

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